

From Information to Transformation

A TEACHING & PRAYER TOOL OF BETHESDA HOUSE



INTRODUCTION

A recent advert said, "A ripped body and abs with just 5 minutes work-out per day!" Stores sell electric muscle-stimulating devices that promise to contract the muscles and burn away fat while you eat your second super-size pizza. Both of these approaches are not right. Effective physical training comes down to discipline, hard work, healthy diet and rest. We can apply the same principle to our spiritual lives. One's spiritual capacity grows through practice and regular use, just like muscle training (Hebrews 5:14).

You can be impacted by a video or podcast, but if you do not actively apply that principle or revelation within a short amount of time, the message can become a momentary spiritual stimulant. You remain in a similar state without understanding why change didn't come.

We have found it helpful to break down the process of information to transformation to these stages:

INFORMATION, REVELATION, APPLICATION AND TRANSFORMATION

Information

Information is the currency of the mind. Mere information brings little spiritual transformation. In fact, on its own, it can make us critical of others and prideful (1 Corinthians 8:1-2). Knowledge can be likened to seeds; carrying potential of life, but without germination by the Holy Spirit, these insights remain dormant in impact. When engaging with our resources, a phrase might "jump up" at you and impact your spirit. This signifies that it has become revelation.

Revelation

Revelation is the currency of your spirit. This is when information has germinated. As you "water" it or focus on what Holy Spirit is emphasising, it will progressively unfold with more revelation around that subject. It has become alive and started to grow in your spirit, like a sprout grows into a stem and leaves.

Some questions you can ask to bring further revelation:

"What is God saying to me through this?"

"Which aspects are impacting me the most?"

"How is what was shared relevant to my life?"

Application

Once something has become a personal revelation, we encourage you to process the implications of this on how you think, talk and act. Revelation is meant to lead to action. As truth multiplies in us, it should set new habits.

Some questions you can ask to process application:

"What new ways of thinking, believing, acting, talking, and relating are needed as a result of this revelation?"

"What hinders this revelation from changing me?" (And bring those lies, pain, mindsets, sin patterns before the Lord, removing them through prayer).

"God, how do you want me to respond?"

Transformation

At this point, you walk in new habits. Your thinking has changed, because truth has increased inside of you. The difference from application to transformation is that it no longer takes effort and you don't even feel the temptation of the old. You're not trying to clothe yourself with a new mindset, you are that "new you." As the root changed, the fruit is inevitably new too. You have come full circle, from mere information on a website to it becoming part of you.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH TAKES EFFORT AND DEDICATION

This may sound discouraging, but the more breakthrough you get, the easier and more fulfilling it becomes to live the Christian life. Be encouraged that there is nothing you're wrestling against that has not been overcome by thousands of others applying the truth of Jesus. At times, you might wrestle for a while, until it trickles down to your thinking and actions. God rewards those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Second Peter 1: 5-8 urges us to give all diligence to work these things out in our lives so that we are neither barren or unfruitful in our knowledge of Jesus. Spiritual determination, a hunger for change and an inability to give up are the greatest catalysts of spiritual breakthrough. Without these, you can spiritually wither.

Your level of emotional wholeness, upbringing and current season can affect your capacity to hear and receive from God. Think of a malnourished child that can only take in so much food or drink, even though the child is hungry. In the same way, as you digest and apply revelation, greater capacity will come.

EVANGELISE THE UNBELIEVING AREAS OF YOUR HEART

Although we've accepted Jesus into our lives, there are some areas in each of our lives that haven't grasped the fullness of the salvation message yet – who God is and who we are in Him.

For example: You know and believe God is your provider. However, if you were to lose all your income today, you might experience fear and anxiety. The presence of fear would reveal a part of your heart that doesn't trust God or 'know' what your mind knows, even if you can quote from Scripture. So there is a need for a deeper revelation of His trustworthiness and heart for you. When revelation sinks in, it soothes that anxious area, casting out fear.

We need to keep introducing those areas to the truth of what God says, and invite Him to minister. These things don't always subside automatically. It requires us to recognize pain and lies that oppose truth and bring them to the Lord, until we get revelation that sets us free. We work from our one side as God works from the other to see Jesus formed in us (Philippians 2:12-13).

STEWARD WHAT YOU RECEIVE

God has a very different way of looking at stewardship. God actually calls giving something back in the same state as you received it “wickedness”. In Matthew 25:14, we read the story of a man who gave five, two and one talents (amount of currency) to his workers according to their abilities and then went away. The men with five and two talents made more, but the man with the one buried it to give it back in the same state. In verse 26, God calls Him “wicked and lazy”. So we need to give account for what we’ve spiritually received and have not applied. Western Christian culture leans towards knowing more than what we apply. It is better to listen to one message a year and apply it, than listen to many weekly messages, applying none.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Avoid reading or taking in spiritual input when in a hurry. Make time and space for Him.
- Read/listen with an expectation for God to speak directly to you.
- When a verse or phrase impacts your spirit, keep reading it slowly over and over. Reflect deeply on it, journal in conversation with God about it until it unfolds. It may mean remaining with a passage for several days or weeks.
- If you sense God wants to speak but you cannot perceive clearly, try reading it slowly over and over. If it's still not impacting your heart to the level you know it needs to, you can switch to fasting. Fasting often generates greater faith, breakthrough and revelation (Mark 9:14-29, Daniel 10). Keep “knocking” on that truth until God starts to open it up (Matthew 7:7-11).
- Regularly review and meditate on what the Lord has spoken to you and about you, until you see yourself through the same lens.
- Avoid approaching prophecies and the sensation they give as spiritual food for that day. The promises are seeds, not to be eaten, but rather planted and watered to produce a harvest. Write out what God has said through prophetic words. Study it and align your life, identity and actions with this until you see it come to pass. That process can take a few years, but in doing this, you will become a good steward of what God is speaking.
- Sometimes our old habits will continue regardless of taking hold of new truth. Falling into habits or sins means you fell, not that you failed. It's only failing if we give up. Remember a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again (Proverbs 24:16). Become a pro-wrestler, working out your salvation until Jesus is formed in you!

For more info, go to www.bethesda-house.org

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